



**HB 110 Interested Party Testimony
Alan Close, Cleveland Communications
Sheriff Todd Corbin, Huron County
Senate Committee on Local Government and Elections
Chairwoman Theresa Gavarone
May 5, 2021**

Chairwoman Gavarone, Vice Chairwoman O'Brien, Ranking Member Maharath and members of the Local Government and Elections Committee, thank you for allowing us to testify today as interested parties on HB 110, the state biennial budget bill.

My name is Alan Close, I'm the President of Cleveland Communications, Inc. a family owned small business located in Parma, Ohio and I have with me this morning Sheriff Todd Corbin of Huron County, Ohio.

Cleveland Communications, Inc. is an L3Harris public safety radio system integrator dedicated to providing best in class communications equipment and services to First Responders throughout northern Ohio. We maintain radio systems for the City of Parma, Ottawa County, Huron County, Medina County, the City of Elyria and soon Lorain County. The large number of county and city agencies that depend on these critical communications systems know that Cleveland Communications and L3Harris are dedicated to providing that critical lifeline they depend on not just for day-to-day communications but those moments when lives depend on being able to communicate emergency information.

These agencies have chosen specifically to not join the Multi-Agency Radio Communication System (MARCS) offered by the State of Ohio through the Department of Administrative Services. Sheriff Corbin can elaborate further, but the reasons why local agencies have used their public tax dollars for a non-MARCS system are cost, control, coverage and customer service. They have purchased a radio system that they own, that costs less, provides greater coverage and has better customer service than the MARCS system. Simply, they have purchased the radio system that best fits their local needs.

(Sheriff Corbin) Thank you for this opportunity to address the committee. First responders in Huron County had the opportunity to upgrade our VHF radio communications and selected Cleveland Communications and L3Harris after researching several other vendors/options, including the MARCS system. Cleveland Communications and L3Harris provided the most economical and best option for us. We are currently utilizing the upgrade system which was purchased by the citizens of Huron County through the approval of a levy. After a 2.2 million dollar investment, I feel it is in our best interest to be able to communicate with users on the MARCS radio system through the ISSI. The biggest

advantage for us utilizing the Cleveland Communications/L3Harris system is that we own the system and are not reliant on a large bureaucracy to maintain it. We are extremely happy with the upgraded system that currently allows for interoperability of the law enforcement agencies and soon the integration of fire and emergency medical services within Huron County. The one item missing in all this is the ability to interface to the MARCS system.

(Alan) The below graphic shows the non-MARCS agencies in northern Ohio. The issue that is becoming more of a problem is these radio systems currently don't have the ability to communicate and be interoperable with the MARCS system. A critical link between the L3Harris networks in northern Ohio and the Ohio MARCS radio systems is desperately needed.

Fortunately, this problem has an easy solution, one that we have been proposing to DAS for several years. Both Ohio MARCS and the L3Harris networks in Ohio are APCO P-25 based systems. APCO P-25 provides a design standard for interfacing disparate radio systems in the ISSI which connects these systems at the highest level. Giving the two systems the ability to talk to each other only requires DAS to purchase an Inter-Sub System Interface (ISSI) which once installed will allow for communication between the two networks.

With the help of Representative Ray we proposed an amendment to HB 110 which would provide the funding for DAS to purchase an ISSI from Motorola for Ohio MARCS which when installed will be interfaced to our ISSI in Parma completing the link between the two networks.

This purchase would allow for local governments, law enforcement, and health and safety-first responders to continue to purchase the radio system that best fits their needs while also providing true interoperability between systems.

We'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.

